



**Department of
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News Release

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VA Secretary Named "Person of the Year" by Hospice Group

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi received the “Person of the Year” award from the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization at its annual conference here on Sept. 30.

“The comprehensive programs we have in the Department of Veterans Affairs and the skilled palliative services we offer are among the most personally gratifying achievements in my tenure as secretary,” said Principi.

The annual award honors a hospice advocate for raising public awareness about end-of-life care. VA is the country’s largest integrated health care system. The organization cited the secretary’s strong leadership, support and commitment to hospice and palliative care.

In the past three years, VA has taken numerous steps to enhance hospice care, including:

- Making hospice and palliative care available to all enrolled patients;
- Establishing palliative care teams in all VA hospitals and increasing staff training;
- Setting VA policy for the purchase of comprehensive hospice services in communities;
- Making home hospice care a separately listed request in VA’s annual budget;
- Creating dedicated hospice program positions in VA’s Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care; and
- Forming partnerships in states to strengthen collaboration between VA facilities and hospice agencies.

- More -

Hospice 2/2/2/2

Palliative care is a critical mission for VA. VA hospice care helps make the remaining days of veterans with terminal conditions as comfortable as possible.

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization is the oldest and largest nonprofit membership organization representing end-of-life programs and professionals in the United States.

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